

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A device for storing and/or dispensing, one by one or either in homogeneous or non homogeneous bundles, substantially planar items in the form of rigid or flexible sheets, comprising at least one supporting element driven in rotation by at least one electric motor and a ribbon wound on said supporting element and on at least one take- up member for taking up said ribbon, the planar items being stored sequentially between successive windings of said ribbon that are wound and unwound between said supporting element and said at least one take-up member, wherein said supporting element is made of a rigid material and has a non-circular cross section for obtaining one or more distinct rigid resting surfaces, on which said planar items rest and said ribbon is wound.

2. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein said supporting element comprises one or more convex resting surfaces.

3. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein said supporting element comprises one or more concave resting surfaces.

4. (Currently Amended) The device, according to claim 1, wherein said supporting element comprises one or more [[plane]]planar resting surfaces.

5. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 1, wherein said supporting element comprises at least two resting surfaces, on which said ribbon is wound.

6. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein each of said planar items is stored, either totally or in part, on each of said one or more resting surfaces.

7. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein said one or more resting surfaces of said supporting element have a quadrangular shape in plan view.

8. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 7, wherein the axis of rotation of said supporting element is substantially parallel to at least one of the sides of said quadrangular surface.

9. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein said supporting element is formed by a plate having a substantially rectangular shape in plan view and comprising at least two of said opposed resting surfaces.

10. (Original) The device according to claim 9, wherein said supporting element is set in rotation about an axis coinciding with one of the axes of symmetry of said plate.

11. (Original) The device according to claim 9, wherein said substantially rectangular plate has a larger side of dimension equal to or greater than the larger dimension of said planar items in plan view and a smaller side of dimension equal to or greater than the smaller dimension of said planar items in plan view.

12. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 1, wherein said ribbon comprises at least one film wound in part on said supporting element and in part on at least one take-up member.

13. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 1, wherein said ribbon comprises at least two distinct films wound in part on said supporting element and in part on at least two corresponding distinct take-up members, the planar items being stored sequentially between said two distinct films.

14. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 12, wherein at least one of said films has at least one of its surfaces rough, coarse, irregular or in any case non-smooth.

15. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 12, wherein at least one of said films is embossed.

16. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 12, wherein at least one of said films has at least one surface, on which there is deposited, either totally or in part, a layer of material with properties of adherence.

17. (Original) The device according to claim 13, wherein said at least two take-up members are driven in rotation by distinct electric motors.

18. (Original) The device according to claim 13, wherein said at least two take-up members are driven in rotation by a single motor.

19. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 12, wherein said take-up members are constituted by cylindrical rollers.

20. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 12, wherein said take-up members are constituted by rollers with polygonal cross section.

21. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 1, further comprising a controller to control the traction of said ribbon between said supporting element and said at least one take-up member.

22. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 21, wherein said controller comprises at least one dandy-roller system.

23. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 21, wherein said controller includes one or more braking systems that can be operated upon command.

24. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 21, wherein said controller includes one or more braking systems with pre- defined friction.

25. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 21, wherein said controller includes a drive to drive in rotation in just one direction, mounted on the shafts of said take-up members.

26. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 1, further comprising one or more optical sensors to detect the angular position of said supporting element.

27. (Original) The device according to claim 1, wherein said device is formed by at least two distinct portions that can be separated from one another.

28. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 27, wherein said device includes at least one first portion containing at least the motor for actuation in rotation of said supporting element and at least one or more motors for actuation in rotation of one or more take-up members of said ribbon, as well as at least one second portion containing at least said supporting element and said one or more take-up members.

29. (Original) The device according to claim 28, wherein there are provided gear drive means set between said motors contained in said first portion and the elements driven in rotation contained in said second portion.

30. (Currently Amended) A method for storing and/or dispensing, one by one or either in homogeneous or non homogeneous bundles, substantially planar items in the form of rigid or flexible sheets, including:

- storing sequentially said planar items between successive windings of a ribbon which is wound on a supporting element driven in rotation by at least one electric motor and unwound from at least one take-up member,
- dispensing sequentially said planar items previously stored by unwinding said ribbon from said supporting element and winding the ribbon on at least one take-up member,

forming said supporting element in a non-circular cross section made of rigid material for obtaining one or more distinct rigid resting surfaces, on which said planar items rest and said ribbon is wound.

31. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, wherein said planar items are stored on a supporting element comprising one or more convex resting surfaces.

32. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, wherein said planar items are stored on a supporting element comprising one or more concave resting surfaces.

33. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 30, wherein said planar items are stored on a supporting element comprising one or more [[plane]]planar resting surfaces.

34. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, wherein said ribbon is wound on a supporting element comprising at least two resting surfaces.

35. (Original) The method according to claim 30, wherein each of said planar items is stored, either totally or in part, on each of said one or more resting surfaces.

36. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, further comprising forming said resting surfaces to have a substantially quadrangular shape in plan view, and setting said supporting element in rotation about an axis which is substantially parallel to at least one of the sides of said quadrangular plane surfaces.

37. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, further comprising forming said supporting element by a plate having a substantially rectangular shape in plan view, comprising at least two of said opposed resting surfaces.

38. (Original) The method according to claim 37, wherein said supporting element is set in rotation about an axis coinciding with one of the axes of symmetry of said plate.

39. (Original) The method according to claim 37, wherein said substantially rectangular plate has a larger side of dimension equal to or greater than that of the larger side of said planar items and a smaller side of dimension equal to or greater than that of the smaller side of said planar items.

40. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, wherein said ribbon comprises at least one film wound in part on said supporting element and in part on said at least one take-up member.

41. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, wherein said ribbon comprises at least two distinct films wound in part on said supporting element and in part on at least two corresponding distinct take-up members, the planar items being stored sequentially between said two distinct films.

42. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 40, further comprising forming at least one of said films to have at least one of its surfaces rough, coarse, irregular or in any case non-smooth.

43. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 40, wherein at least one of said films is embossed.

44. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 40, wherein at least one of said films has at least one surface on which there is deposited, either totally or in part, a layer of material with properties of adherence.

45. (Original) The method according to claim 41, wherein said at least two take-up members are driven in rotation by distinct electric motors.

46. (Original) The method according to claim 41, wherein said at least two take-up members are driven in rotation by a single motor.

47. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 40, wherein said take-up members are constituted by cylindrical rollers.

48. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 40, wherein said take-up members are constituted by rollers with polygonal cross section.

49. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, further comprising controlling traction of said ribbon between said supporting element and said at least one take-up member.

50. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 49, wherein said controlling of traction is performed by at least one dandy-roller system.

51. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 49, wherein said -controlling of traction is performed by one or more braking systems that can be operated upon-command.

52. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 49, wherein said -controlling of traction is performed by one or more braking systems with pre-defined friction.

53. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 49, wherein said -controlling of traction is performed by means for driving in rotation in just one direction, mounted on the shafts of said take-up members.

54. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, further comprising detecting the angular position of said supporting element.

55. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, wherein said planar items are carried in a position corresponding to said ribbon and/or said at least one plane surface of said supporting element along a path that is substantially parallel to the direction of movement of said ribbon.

56. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, wherein said planar items are carried in a position corresponding to said ribbon and/or said at least one plane surface of said supporting element along a path substantially perpendicular to the direction of movement of said ribbon.

57. (Previously Presented) A machine for storing and/or dispensing substantially planar items in the form of rigid or flexible sheets, comprising one or more storing and/or dispensing devices according to claim 1.

58. (Previously Presented) A device for storing and/or dispensing substantially planar items in the form of rigid or flexible sheets, comprising at least one supporting element to be driven in rotation by at least one electric motor and a ribbon to be wound on said supporting element and on at least one take-up member for taking up said ribbon, the planar items being stored sequentially between successive windings of said ribbon that are wound and unwound between said supporting element and said at least one take-up member, wherein said supporting element has a non-circular cross section to define one or more distinct resting surfaces, on which said ribbon is wound, and wherein the device further comprises one or more optical sensors to detect the angular position of the supporting element.

59. (Previously Presented) A method for storing and/or dispensing substantially planar items in the form of rigid or flexible sheets, including:

- storing sequentially said planar items between successive windings of ribbon which are wound on a supporting element driven in rotation by at least one electric motor and unwound from at least one take-up member;

- dispensing sequentially said planar items previously stored by unwinding said ribbon from said supporting element and winding them on at least one take-up member;

-forming said supporting element to have a non-circular cross section to define one or more distinct resting surfaces, on which said ribbon is wound; and

-detecting the angular position of the supporting element.